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turer periods of the life of such races, they had always a harder and a harder struggle against the growth of intelligence, of the historical sense, and of the critical spirit, till at last they sunk into the sort of superstition that is possible only to the ignorant. In every best sense of the word the Christian incarnation is *historical*; that divine story of it which is the basis of all Christian faith was produced and was fully accepted, just at that period in the world's annals when myths, and religions founded on myths, were most discredited, and least likely to find acceptance. (4) Lastly, the pagan incarnations, even while, as we have seen, revealing some just sense of what is worthy of divinity, nevertheless were far more incarnations of what is worst in man, than what is befitting in any idea of God. Such a beneficent exemplar as the Christian incarnation affords was never even dreamed of in them, while their moral tendency and effect are disastrously illustrated in the history and fate of all pagan nations.

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### DR. TAYLER LEWIS ON BIBLICAL STUDY.

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The subjoined letter, which I received from Dr. Lewis not long before his death, in answer to some inquiries I had addressed him about biblical study, will be of interest, I think, to the readers of *THE OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT*. The world knows how thorough was his scholarship; but in addition to this he was one of the most inspiring and reverent teachers that ever lived. A significant comment on his recommendation of "indefatigable and ceaseless reading" may be furnished by a memorandum I once saw in his Hebrew Bible (I give it as nearly as I can remember, and I think the numbers are right): "Finished 13th reading . . . . . 1849;" and the students had the tradition that it had been for many years his custom to read the Bible through, in the original, once a year.

JOHN F. GENUING.

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UNION COLLEGE, SCHENECTADY, Oct. 20, 1875.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND:—Since receiving your letter I have been a good deal unwell, some of the time unable to attend to college duties, or to do anything else. Please accept this as my apology for the delay in answering you.

It is not easy to give directions for biblical study. The best and first requisite is a *love of it*, which I think you possess. In the next place, there should be indefatigable and ceaseless *reading*, until there is acquired something that may be called *tact*, a feeling of the beauty and power of the language, a thinking in it, or something of the familiarity that we have in reading our own tongue. Grammars and lexicons alone will never give this, and yet one who possesses it, or begins to possess it, is in a better condition to understand the Scriptures than the most critical scholar *without it*. I may not have expressed this clearly, but I used to talk about it in my Hebrew class, and, perhaps, you remember what I was fond of saying.

As for books, you cannot dispense with Gesenius' large "Thesaurus," in three volumes. It contains much more than the Manual, and I would recommend it to you as a book to be *read*, and not merely consulted. This may seem strange, the reading of a dictionary in regular course; but I can say that I have not only found profit in it, but entertainment. What we consult for a particular purpose is apt to pass out of the mind as soon as the purpose is answered. The other mode will soon fix the attention, and become interesting.

Next to a lexical Thesaurus, you want the sources from which such a work is made. The first of these is a full Hebrew Concordance. Fuerst's Concordance costs \$18, but it is worth a row of lexicons and commentaries without it. Great is the light derived from tracing words, even the more familiar words, throughout the Bible by means of a concordance. It will be one of the best methods of acquiring that *tact* of which I spoke.

An exceedingly valuable help is Böttcher's "Encyclopædic Grammar"\*—a large work on almost everything pertaining to the Hebrew language,—grammar, history, idioms, etc. It is remarkably full of citations, especially in grammatical points, making what may be called a concordance of forms and idioms. In these respects it may be called *exhaustive in its fullness*.

Another valuable work is Noldius' Concordance of the Hebrew Particles, containing more important matter for the student and the critic. It is an old work and may be difficult to obtain.

Another old work is more accessible: Glassius' *Philologia Sacra*. It is a mine of Biblical knowledge. I have learned from it more than from any of the modern German works of greater pretension. It is in easy Latin. As to commentaries, I can only mention some of the latest and best of the German, which I suppose you read. If not, you should apply yourself to the study as indispensable to one who means to be a Biblical scholar. Among these may be named Keil, Delitzsch, Ewald,—(English) Wordsworth, etc.

In regard to cognate languages,—learn Syriac by all means. You will find it very easy. The best grammar is Hoffmann's. But it is too large and too elaborate for a beginner. Uhlemann's grammar is the one more commonly used, and there is a very excellent translation of it made by Mr. Hutchinson, an American scholar, and published by Appleton, N. Y. (octavo). The Syriac Testament you can get from the Bible Society. The Syriac is a very easy language. To one who has a tolerable acquaintance with Hebrew, it will be not only an easy but a very pleasant study. It is very important in the study of the New Testament, and has a delightful interest from the fact of its being, as near as we can judge, the very language of our Saviour, of which the Greek, *though first in writing*, is, after all, hardly anything more than a translation.

The Arabic is a difficult language, but you will want it if you mean to be a Biblical scholar. It has been abused, and as employed by some commentators has sometimes shed more darkness than light upon the Hebrew text; but a scholar needs it for the very purpose of seeing this. Some of the Germans have been possessed with the idea of interpreting everything in the Bible by their favorite Arabic. This has led to great extravagance. Still, the knowledge of it is a great Biblical help. The difficulty of which I speak is confined to the orthography, and a few things in the grammar, which are perplexing. These mastered, its resemblance to the Hebrew will make it comparatively easy to one who understands that language. If you conclude to study Arabic, I will give you an account of the first books you will need.

In all these things, if you are enthusiastic, you can be your own teacher. A man may become an excellent classical and Biblical scholar without going to Germany.

Most truly yours,

TAYLER LEWIS.

Rev. J. F. Genung.

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\* Boettcher, "Ausführliches Lehrbuch der hebraeischen Sprache" is meant.